1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

we have here primitive and undeveloped religious sentiment where the personality of the deity is hardly separated from striking natural phenomena, or remnants of some old cultus of the heavenly bodies, mountains, and tribal deities preserved in a hazy way by a military race which had not paid much attention to religion.

The Masai believe that ordinary persons die like cattle, and they throw away their corpses to be eaten by hyenas[1], in the revoltingly unceremonious way common to many East African tribes. Medicine men, however, and influential people are buried, and their souls are said to pass into snakes, which are respected in consequence. Many tribes on the Nile also reverence snakes. It is noticeable that death and misfortune are not attributed to witchcraft. The Laibon is not the same as the Witch Doctor of the Bantu tribes, and it is no part of his duties to detect witches.

As the Masai men will practically do nothing but fight or tend cattle, they are naturally dependent on others for all articles, including their arms, which cannot be manufactured by women. There is among them a special tribe of smiths, called Il-Kunono, who make iron weapons, but are treated as inferiors and not allowed to marry Masai women. A somewhat similar tribe are the Dorobo or hunters.

It would appear that the military organization, the aversion to hunting, to eating game or vegetable food, and to engaging in agriculture or any productive art are peculiarities specially developed by the Masai, though some of them have been imitated by other tribes. Another peculiarity is the shape of their houses—long low buildings constructed of poles, grass, and mud, and divided into rooms by partitions. Their other customs, however, seem to tally with those of the Latuka, Bari, and Dinka, as far as differences of residence and occupation permit. Remarkable points of agreement are the nudity of the men, the shaven heads of the women, extraction of the middle teeth of the lower jaw, resting in a standing position on one leg, drinking the blood from living animals, and spitting as a sign of affection or benediction.

Linguistic evidence points the same way, though ampler and clearer information about the languages of the Nile is desirable for purposes of comparison. It is no want of respect to the labours of Sir H. Johnston and others to say that the researches of Mr. Hollis have for the first time

[1] It has been suggested that this practice may be due to a desire not to contaminate the earth by burial, but Mr. Hollis could find no trace of this idea, although he carefully inquired.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

Naa, ten ēă en-ginyi-kerai, neitau 'ñgotonye ake 'n-dōkitin.

If a baby dies, its mother only lays aside her ornaments[1].

Il-tauja oo 'l-meneñga[2] loo-'l-tuñganak, oo 'l-asuria.

People's souls and spirits, and snakes[3].

Ten etaa en-nēă ol-tuñgani, nēji etaa en-neduñgo ol-tau lenye. Naa, ten ēă ol-tuñgani, ore p' einosi, nēă ăii ol-tau lenye. Nēji eidipi anaa 'n-gishu: meitōki ol-tau apiu.

When a man is on the point of death, people say he is about to cut his heart; and when he dies and is eaten (by hyenas), his soul dies with him. It is believed that all is over as with the cattle, and that the soul does not come to life again[4].

Kake ten ēă ol-oiboni araki ol-karsis, nenukari, ore pe eñgwēyu o-sesen lenye, nēji etawale ol-tau lenye, etaa ol-asurai; nelo ol-asurai eng-añg oo-'n-gera enyena, neiñguraa.

But when a medicine-man or a rich person dies and is buried, his soul turns into a snake as soon as his body rots; and the snake goes to his children's kraal to look after them.

Ti-araki naa nēja, pe mēar il-Maasae 'l-asuria lenye. Naa, ten edol i-ñgorōyok ol-asurai ti-aji, nesuaki kulle, nemej ol-asurai, nelo.

The Masai in consequence do not kill their sacred snakes, and if a woman sees one in her hut, she pours some milk on the ground for it to lick, after which it will go away.

Etii 'l-asuria oorook, naa le-'n-gishōmi oo-'l-Aiser; naa, ten ēar likae etii 'l-oopeny, nējo: 'Miar, amu 'l-kulalañg.'

There is a black snake, which is sacred to the Aiser clan; and if a person of another clan were to strike the snake whilst the owners were present, they would tell him to desist as it belongs to them.

[1] The Dinka, Bari, and other Nilotic tribes follow similar customs (Kaufmann, *Schilderungen*, pp. 130, 192; and *Emin Pasha in Central Africa*, p. 338, &c.).

[2] Ol-tau, the heart, mind, soul; ol-meneñgani, the corpse, spirit, ghost.

[3] The Dinka, Bari, Latuka, and other Nilotic tribes, also pay reverence to snakes (Kaufmann, *loc. cit.*, pp. 127, 188; Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa*, vol. i, p. 35; Casati, *Ten Years*, p. 31; *Emin Pasha*, *loc. cit.*, p. 339, &c.). The Zulus hold that divine ancestral shades are embodied in certain tame and harmless snakes, whom their human kinsfolk receive with kindly respect and propitiate with food (Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii, pp. 8, 233).

[4] The Dinka and Bari likewise disbelieve in a life after death (Kaufmann, *loc. cit.*, pp. 124, 188).

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

778 825 Eata sii en-gishōmi naji 'l-Tarōsero 'l-asuria lenye sambu. Naa, ten ēarare ol-tuñgani loo-'l-Tarōsero ol-likae, pe meitēu, neipot 'l-asuria lenyena, nējo: 'E-aile e-'ng-aji e-yēyo, talakunye!' Naa, ten eitu ekwet lidoōarare, nepwōnu, 'l-asuria asony.

The Tarosero family have their own particular snakes, which are of many hues; and when a member of this family fights with some one and gets the worst of the combat, he calls upon his snakes, and says: 'The avengers of my mother's house, come out!' If the man with whom he is fighting does not run away, the snakes will come and bite him.

[614] Eata sii kulye-shomīto 'l-asuria lenye. Etii 'l-asuria ooibor, netii 'l-oonyokyo, netii sii 'l-oonyori. Etii 'l-kulikae ooata en-dōki natii e-murt anaa ol-kila lo-'l-móruo, neibor kulikae 'l-lughuny anaa ol-móruo kitok.

The other clans and families have their sacred snakes as well. Some are white in colour, others red, and others green. Some have a hood like an old-man's cloak, others again have white heads like very old people.

[791] Ējі sii eata 'l-oibonok 'l-kulenyena ootii ol-bene.

The medicine-men are also said to have snakes, which they keep in their bags.

766 ●775 791 Nēji ten ēā kulikae-tuñganak kituak anaa 'M-Batyany, ore pe enukari, nepwo 'l-tauja lenye eng-ai.

It is believed that the souls of some big people like Mbatian[1] go to heaven after death and burial.

794 828 Ten eirura ol-tuñgani, nemebuaki likae-tuñgani ainyēye. Einyēye akiti, amu ēji: 'Ebaiki meidim ol-tau lenye atorinyunye, nēā.'

A sleeping man must not be awakened suddenly. He must be roused gently, for it is thought that his soul may perhaps not return and he will die.

775 825 Ējo 'l-Maasae metii 'l-menefiga, amu medol; kake ēji edol in-gīshu, naa ten eiñgurua 'n-gīshu pōkin e-wēji nēbo, nēji edol il-menefiga araki ol-ōwaru.

The Masai say there are no such things as ghosts because they do not see them. But it is supposed that cattle see them, and when a herd of cattle all gaze at one spot, they are said to be looking at either a ghost or a beast of prey.

[1] *Vide* p. 326.

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

422 428 Women possess no property save their ornaments. Of these the beads and the necklaces become the property of the daughters, but the wire ornaments are thrown away.

915 916 *Spirit Life.*—My informants declared that the Masai had no belief in a spirit life after death, or in spirits of any kind, but I am not satisfied on this point. For some reason (probably a restriction with a heavy penalty attached) they were unwilling to discuss this subject.

754 *Curses.*—The death-bed curse is considered very terrible, as there is no possible way of escaping its evil effects, for a curse can only be removed by the person who uttered it. A man who has been cursed will use every possible means to have the curse withdrawn immediately lest the utterer of the curse should die. (A curse [915] uttered during life is supposed often to remain inactive until the death of the utterer, and this in itself seems to indicate a belief in some sort of spirit activity.)

PART VIII.—CLANS.

614 The following is a list of the clans and sub-clans among the Masai (it is as nearly complete as possible):—

Main Clan Name.	*Sub-clans.*
No. 1. Laiseer	(1) Laiseer (2) Legetoi (3) Letoya (4) Lukumai (5) Lamothere (6) Libartimaru (7) Loiger.
No. 2. Ndarosiru	(1) Ndarosiru (2) Lanaboguaru.
No. 3. Molelian	(1) Molelian (2) Mbarakineti
No. 4. Magesen	(1) Magesen (2) Lesegu.

PART IX.—CATTLE AND SHEEP.

233 As a pastoral people the Masai have many very interesting customs connected with their flocks, but information on this subject is very hard to obtain, as details of the greatest interest to anthropologists are often not given because they are considered too trifling or too well-known to be worth discussion. A few interesting notes were, however, obtained.

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

775 The Masai know nothing of a life after death, but it is thought that *Laibons* may live on in the form of black snakes.

768 If a death occurs in a hut it is not evacuated until the village moves in the ordinary way (the Masai being nomadic, seldom stay for long in one village). If, however, the village only moves to a new site close to the old one, the family in which the death has occurred must move further away and remain away for two or three months.

789 If a woman has lost her eldest male child she binds a few turns of iron wire below the knees of her next surviving son, in order to make him look like a girl[1] that death may pass him by. A man still wears these coils of wire even when he is old. Such a man is nicknamed *Ol o segingei* (the man of the iron wire).

765 If the head of the family dies a white or a black bullock is slaughtered, and the people smear the fat from the front of the ribs on their bodies and on the garments of the deceased.

757 *Sickness and Medicines.*—The Masai have their treatment for numerous diseases. Members of the Il Darsoero clan appear to be the most skilled in medicine. They have often shown me herbs which they use, but I have for the most part forgotten the Masai names for them, and lack of botanical knowledge prevents me from giving their scientific names. Such Masai as understand the use of herbs have never shown any reluctance to tell me about it.

Sheep's fat plays an important part in nearly all their medicines. For instance: (*a*) If a Masai is bitten by a mad dog (disease called by Masai *Nang'a gotok*, presumably rabies) a sheep must be immediately slaughtered and the fat boiled with bark of *Il Kiluretti* trees. The sufferer drinks this mixture and his skin is smeared all over with the contents of the sheep's stomach. This is said to be a certain preventive if done at once. I described the treatment in greater detail in an appendix to the Narok District Intelligence Report for April, 1929, and it is probably still on file in the Government office.

(*b*) *Anthrax* (Masai *Enderit*).—When this disease appears as an external sore a sheep is slaughtered and the sheepskin is bound round the affected part. The patient drinks the fat of the sheep. He must on no account be allowed to drink water or milk, and if he does so he is almost certain to die. This disease is fairly common among the Masai, but they usually recover from it. In the opinion of some Europeans the Masai treatment is more efficacious than ours.

773 *Honey Wine* (Masai *En-Aisho*).—This is much used at religious ceremonies and other occasions of importance. It is a very pleasant beverage. To make it, honey and water are mixed in about equal quantities in a special gourd called *E-Mosori*, literally "the egg." To this are added the dried fruits of the Sausage

[301]

[1] Because girls wear leg ornaments of iron wire.

/204 cont./

776 779 improvement. He then does this through sickness, drought, or cattle epidemics.

779 721 [186] The Masai feel that they are the chosen people of 'Ng ai; all other peoples should be subject to them. God created the world with all that is in it only for them, and thus everything on earth belongs to them. If they obtain booty in war against another tribe, they are only taking what has been given to them by God for their own, what lawfully belongs to them, and what that tribe is unlawfully withholding from them. "If the el mgg would voluntarily give us our property, for that is what the livestock in their possession is, we should not have to make war on them. But since they do not do this, we are forced into war." And they are constantly waging this war against the despised, savage heathen, who know nothing about 'Ng ai and do not pray to him, but to spirits, which is why he does not assist them and always makes the Masai victors for a worthy cause.

776 779 In their journey through life God protects the Masai through guardian angels, who are pictured as winged, invisible beings of human form. The guardian angels are the same sex as their protégés: a male individual has an ol dunganí l Eíg ai, a female one an eñ gorojoní Eíg ai, watching over them. The angel accompanies the person always and everywhere and protects him from dangers, so that he will not succumb in the struggle for existence before the lifetime previously set for him by God has run out; only then does the person die. The angel carries his soul /285/ to the other world and then [775] undertakes the protection of a child born on the same day. Every day a Masai dies and every day one is born, the people say.

775 779 Into the other world (eñ gatambó = cloud land, i.e., the land where the clouds come from) go the souls of all the deceased, both those of the Masai and of non-Masai, both those of the good and those of the bad people. As soon as a soul reaches the portal of the other world, which lies far to the north (Kopekob), God decides its future fate. The souls of good people gain entry into paradise, which is equipped with all the beauties and splendors of nature. Lush pastures with fat cattle alternate with lakes, rivers, and cool glades whose trees bear the most delicious fruits. In the midst of this splendor the good souls live in human fashion, but without care, trouble, or

/305 cont./

• 775 work. Every day they receive the best food in abundance. Here,
779 however, in accordance with God's command, each one may marry only one wife. The other world, like the earth, is divided into individual lands, each of which is intended for the souls of one people, so that the person who arrives there will find his deceased relatives. Bad human beings are denied this paradise; they are driven into a barren, waterless desert. Those not so bad also gain entry into paradise through God's grace, though not to live in carefree happiness, but to do hard work.

779 This is the Masai religious doctrine as it is handed down and taught by the old men. The supernatural explanation of natural
[781] phenomena has nothing to do with the religious doctrine. In them one sees only the works or expressions of God and therefore observes at least the more powerful ones with something like reverential awe. [illegible] not, say, demonolatry, the deification of personified natural forces.

776 The sun (<u>eig</u> <u>oloi</u>) is regarded largely as a reflection of God,
821 like the gloriously colored morning and evening redness. The clouds mask God before the eyes of mankind, they surround him, from them he looks down on the bustle of the earth. This seems to explain why the Masai call the redness of the morning and evening sky '<u>Ng ai</u> <u>nanjugi</u>, the clouds '<u>Ng ai</u> <u>nabor</u>, and the blue, cloudless sky '<u>Ng ai</u> <u>nanyk</u>. These literally mean "the red God," "the white God," and the "black God," but should properly be translated as "the divine red," "the divine white," and "the divine black," for actually the people see in these phenomena no gods and nothing godlike or to be worshipped like him. It should also be mentioned here that God, who in ordinary speech is always called '<u>Ng</u> ai, is often called '<u>Ng</u> ai nanok or Nai nanok, that is, the black God. In the prayer songs to be discussed later. The Masai themselves do not know any explanation for these strange word-formations, and I have not been able to learn anything from them from which an interpretation could be derived.

/306/ More infrequent than the above explanation for the sun is the one that it and the moon are servants of God, whose duty is to illuminate the earth. In this the sun is regarded as feminine, the

/209 cont./

796 In the songs the following prayer is constantly repeated: 'Ng ai
782 aranaia, 'I' emkiage aronon, kiarnon ag' ije kiarnon eñ gera, eñ
[783] gnishi en aincho, i.e., God, I implore you always! I pray, we pray
539 to you alone, we pray for children, for birth for the barren woman.

Whereas the supplication feasts are usually held on the en
sabich days (from the 18th to the 20th of the month), a joint sup-
plication-prayer, ol dapaun, often takes place on the day of the new
[272] moon. The people of the kraal gather in the evening and, from a
237 buffalo or cattle horn, drink a mixture consisting of milk, a cold
415 extract of eñ gatenajai twigs (Commelina Merkeri K. Sch.), and a
[429] white powder obtained from the ol oibeni, while they say the /210/
539 prayer 'Ng ai je ijok eñ gischon, je ijok ñ gischo, je ijok eñ gera!
That is, may God give us well-being, livestock, and children. If
a larger supplication feast is to be held in a month, the inter sup-
plication ritual always precedes it on the first day of the month.

782 If a small child of one not long detached from the warrior
783 standing dies, he not infrequently sees in it a punishment from God
[784] for his having killed a pregnant woman on an earlier expedition,
provided that he once killed a woman who might have been in this
condition. In order to obtain forgiveness, he offers God a black
gravid sheep, and, to be sure, close to the spot where at that time
he committed the deed. Before he kills the animal, he prays to
God, mentions the purpose of the sacrifice, and asks for pardon.
As penance for his misdeed, he throws the blood and amniotic fluid
(eñ gepa) of the sacrificial animal, as well as the fetus and uterus,
both cut into pieces, upon the spot where it occured. He takes
along neither meat nor skin of the slaughtered animal, but leaves
everything lying there when, after the concluded sacrifice, he
returns to his kraal.

825 The lineage of the El kiboson believes that the bones of the
826 buried corpses of their married men turn into snakes. They therefore
• 775 do not kill these animals, like the other Masai, but are happy about
613 their presence in the kraal and by the huts and, as soon as a snake
appears, set on the ground a shallow dish with milk and honey as
food for it. Snakes in and near El kiboson kraals are not rare.

•775 825 826 613 /210 cont./ Allegedly they never bite the El kiboron people; on the other hand the latter often use them as frightening devices against both Masai and Negroes.

776 The Masai are not familiar with devils, but indeed with the -- male -- demon 'Ngnaunir, whose body is hard as stone and therefore invulnerable, who bears the head of a predatory animal and whose feet are armed with claws. He lies in wait on paths and calls passers-by by name, in order then to tear apart and devour those who approach. For most adults 'Ngnaunir is merely a bogeyman [861] for naughty children. "Do not go too far away," the mother says to the children, "otherwise 'Ngnaunir will get you."

754 If a person brings misfortune, illness, or death to another through sorcery (es ekáu), this is merely the effect of a power inherent in the magic medicine, which is based on the composition of the medicine and is effective through the recitation of certain formulas and 789 the execution of special gestures. The aforementioned amulet ring [751] (ol geretti) protects one against the effect of magic made by another [754] Masai. Women who go into the neighboring areas of foreign tribes to buy vegetables especially protect themselves from their sorcery. They smear their foreheads and cheeks with cattle dung or wear around their necks a cord on which are strung small, split sticks. Other amulets that I found contained, sewed in leather, a mixture of plant powder (from wood, /211/ roots, bark), after which they are named, and a secret medicine of the ol goiatiki, who alone is able to prepare the whole in such a way that it is effective. The [842] legumojig amulet is worn by women around their necks and is regarded as prompting conception. We have become acquainted with another remedy prized by the women barren up to then in connection with the boys' eñ gebita feast. The eñ gogurói is tied around the ankle and protects one from ailments of the legs. The ol durgel [751] is worn by warriors around the neck or wrist for protection against sorcery. In hand-to-hand combat the powder contained in it is also scattered toward the enemy, whereupon the latter is supposed to be forced to give up his resistance. The en jorit protects the husband from the anger of his wife when he has committed some folly, for example, has gone beyond the customary limits on